

**FRANCIS XAVIER.**  
THE APOSTLE OF THE INDIANS.  
[From a powerful article on the origin and history of the Jesuits, in the last Edinburgh Review.]

[Concluded.]

Power and courtly influence form an intoxicating draught even when raised to the lips of an ascetic and a saint. Holy as he was, the Great Father of the Rajah of Travancore seems not entirely to have escaped this feverish thirst. Don Alphonso de Souza, a weak though amiable man, was at that time the Viceroy of Portuguese India, and Xavier (such was now his authority) despatched a messenger to Lisbon to demand, rather than to advise his recall. Within the limits of his high commission, (and what subject is wholly foreign to it?) the ambassador of the King of Kings may owe respect, but hardly deference, to any more earthly monarch. So argued Francis, so judged King John, and so fell Alphonso de Souza, as many a greater statesman has fallen, and may yet fall, under the weight of sacerdotal displeasure. This weakness, however, was not his only recorded fault. Towards the northern extremity of Ceylon lies the Island of Manar, a dependency, in Xavier's day, of the adjacent kingdom of Jaffna, where then reigned a sort of Oriental Philip II. The islanders had become converts to the Christian faith, and expiated their apostasy by their lives. Six hundred men, women and children fell in one royal massacre; and the tragedy was closed by the murder of the eldest son of the King of Jaffna, by his father's orders. Deposition in case of misgovernment, and the transfer to the deposing Power of the dominions of the offender, was no invention of Hastings, or of Clive. It is one of the most ancient constitutional maxims of the European dynasties in India. It may even boast the venerable suffrage of St. Francis Xavier. At his instance, De Souza equipped an armada to hurl the guilty ruler of Jaffna from his throne, and to subjugate his territories to the most faithful King. In the invading fleet the indignant saint led the way, with promises of triumph, both temporal and eternal. But the expedition failed. Cowardice and treachery defeated the design. De Souza paid the usual penalties of ill success. Xavier sailed away to discover other fields of spiritual warfare.

On the Malabar coast, near the city of Meliapor, might be seen in those times the oratory and the tomb of St. Thomas, the first teacher of Christianity in India. It was in a cool and sequestered grove that the apostle had been wont to pray; and there yet appeared on the living rock, in bold relief, the cross at which he knelt, with a crystal fountain of medicinal waters gushing from the base of it. On the neighboring height, a church with a marble altar, stained after the lapse of fifteen centuries, with the blood of the martyr, ascended the sacred spot at which his bones had been committed to the dust. To this venerable shrine Xavier retired, to learn the will of Heaven concerning him. If we may believe the oath of one of his fellow pilgrims, he maintained on this occasion, for seven successive days, an unbroken fast and silence—no unfit preparation for his approaching conflicts. Even under the tomb of the apostle malignant demons growl by night; and, though strong in the guidance of the Virgin, Xavier not only found himself in their obscene grasp, but received from them blows, such as no weapons in human hands could have inflicted, and which had nearly brought to a close his labors and his life. Baffled by a superior power, the fiends opposed a still more subtle hindrance to his designs against their kingdom. In the garb, and in the outward semblance of a band of choristers, they disturbed his devotions by such soul-shaking strains, that the very harmonies of Heaven might seem to have been awakened to divert the Christian warrior from his heavenward path. All in vain their fury and their guile. He found the direction he implored, and the first bark which sailed from the Comorandel shore to the city of Malacca, bore the obedient Missionary to that great emporium of Eastern Commerce.

Thirty years before the arrival of Xavier, Malacca had been condemned to every form of sensual and enervating indulgence. Through her crowded streets a strange and somber vision passed along, pealing like a falcon, and earnestly imploring the prayers of the faithful for that guilty people. Curiosity and alarm soon gave way to ridicule; but Xavier's pamply was complete. The messenger of divine wrath judged this an unfit occasion for courting aversion or contempt. He became the gayest of the gay, and, in address at least, he every model of an accomplished cavalier. Foiled at their own weapons, his dissolute countrymen acknowledged the irresistible authority of a self-devotion so awful, relieved and embellished as it was by every social grace. Thus the work of reformation prospered, or seemed to prosper. Altars rose in the open streets, the confessional was thronged by penitents, translations of devout books were multiplied; and the saint, foremost in every toil, applied himself, with all the activity of his spirit, to subvert the structure and the graceful pronunciation of the Malabar tongue. But the plague was thus to be stayed. A relapse into all their former habits filled up the measure of their crimes. With prophetic voice Xavier announced the impending chastisements of Heaven; and, shaking off from his feet the dust of the obdurate city, pursued his indefatigable way to Amboyna.

That island, then a part of the vast dominions of Portugal in the East, had scarcely witnessed the commencement of Xavier's exertions, when a fleet of Spanish vessels appeared in hostile array on the shores. They were invaders and encroachers; for their expedition had been disavowed by Charles V. Pestilence, however, was raging among them; and Xavier was equally ready to hazard his life in the cause of Portugal, or in the service of his afflicted enemies. Day and night he lived in the infected ships, soothing every spiritual distress, and exerting all the magical influence of his name to procure for the sick whatever might contribute to their recovery or soothe their pains. The coals of fire, thus heaped on the heads of the pirates, melted hearts otherwise Steele to pity; and to Xavier belonged the rare, perhaps the unrivaled, glory of repelling an invasion by no weapons but words of self-denial and love.

But glory, the praise of men or their gratitude, what were these to him? As the Spaniards retired peacefully from Amboyna, he, too, quitted the half-aided multitude whom he had rescued from the horrors of a pirate's war, and, turning all the timid counsel which would have stayed his course, proceeded, as the herald of good tidings, to the half-barbarous islands of the neighboring Archipelago. "If those lands," such was his indignant exclamation, "had scented woods and mines of gold, Christians would find courage to go there; nor would all the perils of the world prevent them. They are dastardly and alarmed, because there is nothing to be gained there but the souls of men, and shall we be less hardy and less generous than avarice? They will destroy me, you say, by poison. It is an honor to which such a siner as I am not aspired; but this I dare to say, that whatever form of torture or of death awaits me, I am ready to suffer it." Nor was this the language of a man sensible to the sorrows of life, or really unafflicted by the dangers he had to incur. "Believe me, my beloved brethren," (we quote from a letter written by him at this time to the Secretary at Rome) "it is in general easy to understand the evangelical maxim, that he who will lose his life shall find it." But when the moment of action has become real, and when the sacrifice of life for God is to be made, it becomes deeply obscure; so weak, indeed, that he alone can comprehend it, to whom, in his mercy, God himself interprets it. Then it is we know how weak and frail we are.

Weak and frail he may have been; but from the days of Paul of Tarsus to our own, the annals of mankind exhibit no other example of a soul borne onward so triumphantly through distress and danger, in all the most appalling aspects. He battled with hunger, thirst, and nakedness, and assassination, and pursued his mission of love, with even increasing ardor, amidst the wildest war of the contending elements. At the island of Moro (one of the group of the Moluccas) he took his stand at the foot of a volcano; and as the pillar of fire threw up its wreaths to heaven, and the earth trembled beneath him, and

the firmament was rent by falling rocks and peals of unintermitting thunder, he pointed to the fierce lightning, and the river of molten lava, and called on the agitated crowd which clung to him for safety, to repent, and to obey the truth; but he also taught them that the sounds which raked their ears were the groans of the infernal world, and the sights which blasted their eyes, an outbreak from the atmosphere of the place of torment. Repairing for the celebration of mass to some edifice which he had consecrated for this purpose, an earthquake shook the building to its base. The terrified worshippers fled; but Xavier, standing in meek composure before the rocking altar, deliberately completed that mysterious sacrifice, with a faith at least in this instance unshaken, in the real presence; rejoicing, as he states in his description of the scene, to perceive that the demons of the island thus attested their flight before the archangel's sword, from the place where they had so long exercised their foul dominion. There is no school-boy of our days who could teach much, unsuspected by Francis Xavier, of the laws which govern the material and the spiritual worlds; nor have we many doctors who know as much as he did of the nature of Him by whom the worlds of matter and of spirit were created; and he studied in the school of protracted martyrdom and active philanthropy, where are divulged secrets unknown and unimagined by the wisest and the most learned of ordinary men. Imparting everywhere such knowledge as he possessed, he ranged over no small part of the Indian archipelago, and at length retraced his steps to Malacca, if even yet his exhortations and his prayers might avert her threatened doom.

It appeared to be drawing night. Alaradin, a Mohammedan chief of Sumatra, had laid siege to the place at the head of a powerful fleet and armed garrison. Seven shattered barks, under the command of the Portuguese, were sent to sea for service, formed their whole maritime strength. Universal alarm overspread the city, and the governor himself at once partook and heightened the general panic. Already, thoughts of capitulation had become familiar to the besieged, and European chivalry had bowed in abject silence to the insulting taunts and haughty menaces of the Moslem. At this moment, in his slight and weather-beaten pinnace, the messenger of peace on earth effected an entrance into the beleaguered harbor. But he came with a loud and indignant summons to the war; for Xavier was still a Spanish cavalier, and he thought it foul scorn that gentlemen, subjects of the most faithful King, should thus be beard by Barbaric enemies, and the worshippers of Christ defied by the disciples of the Arabian impostor. He assumed the direction of the defence. By his advice the seven dismantled ships were promptly equipped for sea. He assigned to each a commander; and having animated the crews with promises of both temporal and eternal triumphs, despatched them to meet and conquer the hostile fleet. As they sailed from the harbor the admiral's vessel ran aground and instantly became a wreck. Returning hope and exultation as promptly gave way to terror; and Xavier, the idol of the preceding hour, was now the object of popular fury. He alone retained his serenity. He upbraided the cowardice of the governor, revived the troops, and encouraged the multitude with prophecies of success. Again the fleet sailed, and a sudden tempest drove it to sea. Day after day passed without intelligence of its safety; once more the hearts of the besieged failed them. Rumors of defeat were rife; the Mohammedans had effected a landing within six leagues of the city, and Xavier's name was repeated from mouth to mouth with cries of vengeance. He knelt before the altar, the menacing people scarcely restrained by the sanctity of the place from imitating him there as a victim to his own disastrous counsels. On a sudden his bosom was seen to heave as with some deep emotion; he raised aloft his crucifix, and with a glowing eye, and in tones like one possessed, breathed a short yet passionate prayer for victory. A solemn awe ensued; the lustiest eye could see within that now fainting, pallid, agitated frame, some power more than human, in communion with the weak spirit of man. What might be the ineffable sense thus conveyed from mind to mind, without the aid of symbols or of words! One half hour of deep and agonizing silence held the awe-stricken assembly in breathless expectation—when, bounding on his feet, his countenance radiant with joy, and his voice clear and ringing as with the swelling notes of the trumpet, he exclaimed, "Christ has conquered for us! At this very moment his soldiers are charging our defeated enemies; they have made a great slaughter; we have lost only four of our defenders. On Friday next the intelligence will be here, and we shall then see our flag again." The catastrophe of such a tale need not be told. Malacca followed her deliverer, and the troops of the victorious squadron, in solemn procession to the church, there, amidst the roar of cannon, the pealing of anthems, and hymns of adoring gratitude, his inward sense heard and reverenced that inarticulate voice which still reminded him, that for him the hour of repose and triumph might never come, till he should reach that state where sin would no longer demand his rebuke, nor grief his sympathy. He turned from the half-dilatory shouts of an admiring people, and retraced his toilsome way to the shores of Comorandel.

He returned to Goa a poor and solitary, but no longer an obscure man. From the Indies to the Yellow Sea, had gone forth a vague and marvelous rumor of him. The tale bore that a stranger had appeared in the semblance of a wayward, subject beggar, who, by some magic influence, and for some inscrutable ends, had bowed the nations to his despotic will, while spurning the wealth, the pleasures, and the homage which they offered to their conqueror. Many were the wonders which travelers had to tell of his progress, and without number the ingenious theories aloft for the solution of them. He possessed the gift of ubiquity, could at the same moment speak in twenty different tongues on as many dissimilar subjects, was impassive to heat, cold, hunger and fatigue, held hourly intercourse with invisible beings, the guides or ministers of his designs, raised the dead to life, and could float, when so it pleased him, across the boiling ocean on the wings of the typhoon. Among the listeners to these prodigies had been Auger, a native and inhabitant of Japan. His conscience was burdened with the memory of great crimes, and he had sought relief in vain from many an expiatory rite, and from the tumults of dissipation. In search of the peace he could not find at home, he sailed to Malacca, there to consult with the mysterious person of whose avatar he had heard. But Xavier was absent, and the victim of remorse was retracing his melancholy voyage to Japan, when a friendly tempest arrested his retreat, and once more brought him to Malacca. He was attended by two servants, and with them, by Xavier's directions, he proceeded to Goa. In these three Japanese, his prophetic eye had at once seen the future instruments of the conversion of their native land; and to that end he instructed them to enter on a systematic course of training in a college, which he had established for such purposes, at the seat of the Portuguese empire in the East. At that place Xavier, ere long, rejoined his converts. Such had been their proficiency, that soon after his arrival they were admitted not only into the church by baptism, but into the society of Jesus, by the performance of the spiritual exercises.

The history of Xavier now reaches a not unwelcome pause. He pined for solitude and silence. He had been too long in constant intercourse with man, and found that, however high and holy may be the ends for which social life is cultivated, the habit, if unbroken, will impair that inward sense through which alone the soul can gather any true intimations of her nature and her destiny. He retired to commune with himself in a seclusion where the works of God alone were to be seen, and where no voices could be heard but those which, in every varying cadence, raise an unconscious anthem of praise and adoration to their Creator. There for a while repose from labors such as few or any other of the sons of men have undergone, he consumed days and weeks in meditating prospects beyond the reach of any vision unenlarged by the habitual exercise of beneficence and piety. There, too, it may be, (for man must still be human,) he surrendered himself to dreams as baseless, and to ecstasies as devoid of any real meaning, as those which haunt the cell of the maniac. Peace be to the hallucinations, if such they were, by which the giant refreshed his slumbering powers, and from which he roused himself to a conflict never again to be remitted till his frame, yielding to the ceaseless pressure, should sink into a premature but hallowed grave.

**PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE.**  
No. 56 John-street.—Notice is hereby given to the relatives and next of kin of Ellen Say, (otherwise called Ellen Evans) deceased, and who is alleged to have died intestate, that the effects of the said intestate, in the hands of the Public Administrator, will be administered and disposed of in accordance with the will of the said intestate, by the Public Administrator, on or before the fourth day of February next. Dated New-York, August 25th, 1842. E. KETCHUM, Public Administrator.

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